

REMARKS

This is in response to the Office Action that was mailed on April 23, 2003. Claim 2 is amended to comply with 37 CFR 1.75(c). In its original form, claim 2 was dependent from claim 1 but did not "further limit" claim 1. The substantive amendments to claims 1 and 2, and the recitations of new claims 9 and 10, are based upon disclosure in the specification from line 14 on page 6 through line 1 on page 7 and in lines 12-13 on page 7. New claim 5 is based upon disclosure in the paragraph beginning at line 4 of page 5 of the specification. New claim 6 is based upon disclosure in line 1 on page 5 of the specification. New claim 7 is based upon disclosure in line 2 on page 5 of the specification. New claim 8 is based upon disclosure in the paragraph bridging pages 5-6 of the specification. New claim 11 is based upon disclosure in the paragraph bridging pages 9-10 of the specification. No new matter has been added by this Amendment. Claims 1-11 are in the application.

Claims 2 and 4 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by US 6,376,453 B1 (Kubota). Claims 2 and 4 were alternatively rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being obvious from Kubota. The rejections are respectfully traversed. The Kubota patent has a §102(e) date of July 22, 1999. However, the present application is entitled to the benefit under 35 U.S.C. §119 of the filing dates of Japanese patent applications nos. 11-009946, filed January 18, 1999 and 11-170144, filed June 16, 1999, both prior to the effective date of the Kubota reference. Enclosed herewith are verified translations into the English language of JP 11-009946 and of JP 11-170144. Particular attention is drawn to sections [0006] - [0008] on pages 7-9 of the translation of JP 11-170144. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejections over Kubota is respectfully solicited.

Claims 1-4 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over WO94/02573 (Van Dijk). The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Van Dijk discloses an embodiment having 15.44% by weight sodium carbonate. This number was determined as follows: The base powder in Van Dijk weighs 45.416 kg (dried) and contains 4.8 kg sodium carbonate. The base powder thus contains 10.57% sodium carbonate. For the second process particle -- 32 kg of base powder $32 \text{ kg} \times 10.57\%$ gives 3.44 kg sodium carbonate; 3.44 kg sodium carbonate in a total of 88 kg is a 2nd process particle having 3.909% sodium carbonate. Mixing 6 kg of sodium carbonate with 44 kg of the 2nd process particle give $6 + 44(.03909) = 7.72 \text{ kg}$ of sodium carbonate in a total material weighing 50 kg. Thus the Van Dijk embodiment has 15.44 weight-% sodium carbonate.

In contrast, the presently claimed compositions contain 15% or less by weight of water-soluble inorganic salts such as sodium carbonate. This characteristic of the presently claimed compositions provides a composition that has good detergency and low temperature dispersibility, even when the composition stands in cold water for a long period of time. Furthermore, the presently claimed compositions have as their objective improving the hand-washing dissolubility of detergent compositions. This beneficial property is neither taught nor suggested by Van Dijk.

Claim 5 further distinguishes over Van Dijk because the claim 5 recitation of potassium ion levels provides compositions that also have improved dissolution rates. See the first full paragraph on page 5 of the specification.

Claims 6-8 further distinguish over Van Dijk due to their improved detergencies with respect to the claims from which they depend. Claim 8 also further distinguishes over Van Dijk due to its improved dissolubility, as pointed out in the sentence bridging pages 5-6 of the specification.

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As pointed out in lines 20-23 on page 9 of the specification, the feature recited in claim 11 further distinguishes the compositions as maintaining excellent low temperature dispersibility without forming hydrated crystals between the detergent granules.

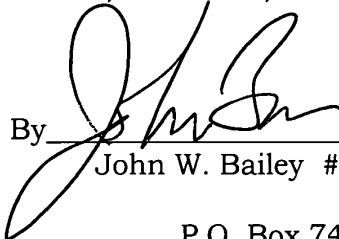
Manifestly, each of claims 1-11 currently before the Examiner recites an invention that is not suggested or otherwise motivated by the Van Dijk disclosure. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection over Van Dijk is respectfully solicited.

Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Richard Gallagher (Reg. No. 18,781) at (703) 2-5=8008.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 CFR 1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

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